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# *The Army's EO Program and Policies*



## Lesson 28: Ethnic Observances

# Overview

- Purpose of Ethnic Observances
- How to Organize an Observance
- Planning an Observance



# Introduction

- During your tenure as an EOR you will encounter many challenges, but none will be as challenging as your role and responsibility in preparing and conducting ethnic observances.
- Ethnic observances recognize the contributions and achievements of all Americans and increase the awareness, mutual respect and understanding of different cultures.



# Purpose Of Special / Ethnic Observances

Special and ethnic observances are designed to develop an awareness of the various cultures that contribute to the American culture.



# Purpose Of Special / Ethnic Observances

- Special and ethnic observances are held annually in support of Joint Congressional Resolution,
- Presidential Proclamation, and Chief of Staff directives.
- These activities are designed to develop an awareness of the various cultures that contribute to the American culture and are a portion of the Army's ongoing equal opportunity education process.



# Purpose Of Special / Ethnic Observances

- Special and ethnic observances provide commanders an opportunity to enhance the human relations climate through increased unity, awareness, and mutual understanding of the accomplishments and contributions of all members of the Army.
- These observances, as with respect to equal opportunity, are the responsibility of the commander.



# Essential Elements For Special / Ethnic Observance

- **Leadership** - Appointment of a project officer should be no later than 90 days prior to the scheduled event. As the primary key to a successful program, the project officer should be:
  - Enthusiastic
  - Assertive
  - In tune with the command's objectives



# Essential Elements For Special / Ethnic Observance

- The magnitude of the observance depends on the interest, desire, and involvement of members of the command.
- A total command approach in the planning and participation of the event(s) cannot be overstated.
- A committee may be appointed with various subcommittees as one approach or an operations plan approach may be taken with staff sections and/or smaller units tasked with specific duties or events.



# Essential Elements For Special / Ethnic Observance

- **Planning** - Regardless of the approach, planning must be thorough and accomplished well in advance of the event.
- Ensure you coordinate with the S3 to add ethnic observances to the unit's long range plan. If committees are formed, it is recommended the following minimum committees be established:
  - 90-120 days out
  - Total command approach
  - Committees
  - Scheduling, planning, finance, publicity, education, luncheon, protocol



# Essential Elements For Special / Ethnic Observance

- Without it, programs can be limited in success.
- Funding could be required for honorariums, food sampling, lodging, transportation, and/or special displays.
- However, lack of funding should not preclude an observance.
- Articles on the theme of the observance can be published in the post or installation newspaper and costs nothing.
- Regarding expenditure of funds, obtaining and dispensing
- of prizes, raffles/drawings and solicitations, the following applies:



# Essential Elements For Special / Ethnic Observance

- **Funding**
  - Food samples 6-20d AR 600-20
  - Honorarium
  - Appropriated funds
  - Solicitations from outside organization prohibited



# Three Elements

- With the ever decreasing availability of funds, the Army does not expect every unit to plan and conduct special/ethnic observances.
- The Army does expect special/ethnic observances to be conducted and supported by leaders and soldiers alike.
- As such, many installations will consolidate the planning, organizing, and executing special/ethnic observances at brigade, division, or installation level.



# Three Elements

- Regardless what level special/ethnic observances are conducted, there are three elements that need to be considered in planning and conducting observances. These are:
  - **Coordination Considerations:**
    - Always keep the commander apprised and, if necessary, obtain the commanders approval of the observance plan.
    - Notify key personnel to compare calendar of events.
    - This includes the G3/S3, public affairs, other committee members, guest speakers, and volunteers.
    - Ensure announcement of events are timely.
    - This includes post/installation newspaper, bulletins, flyers, etc.
    - Obtain necessary funding.



# Three Elements

- **Execution Considerations** - There are many types of events or activities that can be conducted in support of observances. They can be conducted separately or combined into the overall program.

*These are:*

- Guest Speakers.
- Ethnic meals at the dinning facility.
- Displays and artifacts.
- Talent or fashion show and dance groups.
- Essay and poster contests.
- A film festival.
- Designate a specific day for groups to wear ethnic attire.



# Three Elements

- **After-Action** - After the special or ethnic observance is conducted, committee members should meet and prepare an after-action report (AAR).
- The AAR provides the leadership with a report on actions that took place, the positive and negative elements, costs, and recommendations to consider for planning future events.



# Conclusion

- During this block of instruction we have covered special and ethnic observances.
- Planning, executing, and conducting observances require a team effort of all leaders, commander, soldiers, EOAs and EORs.
- Ethnic observances are for all Americans. In your duties as EORs and as leaders, you must encourage all members of your command, family members, and civilian employees to participate.

